

Dated: January 28, 1999.

**Don A. Christensen,**

*Associate Administrator for Investment.*

[FR Doc. 99-2707 Filed 2-4-99; 8:45 am]

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## **SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

### **Chairs-Regional Fairness Boards 1-10 Meeting**

The Small Business Administration Chairs-Regional Fairness Board 1-10 Meeting Located in the geographical area of Chicago, IL, will hold a strategy meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 9, 1999 at SBA National Ombudsman's Office, 500 W Madison St., Suite 1240, Chicago, IL 60661, to collect Fairness Board Chairs' comments on the 1999 draft Report To Congress, as well as to obtain recommendations and other input for the annual Report to Congress.

For further information, contact, Gary P. Peele (312) 353-0880.

**Shirl Thomas,**

*Director, Office of External Affairs.*

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## **SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

### **Region VI—Houston District Advisory Council Meeting; Public Meeting**

The U.S. Small Business Administration—Region VI—Houston Advisory Council, located in the geographical area of Houston, Texas will hold a public meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2, 1999. The meeting will be conducted in the Conference Room at the Small Business Administration, 9301 Southwest Freeway, Suite 550, Houston, Texas 77074. This meeting will be conducted to discuss such business as may be presented by members of the District Advisory Council, the staff of the U.S. Small Business Administration, and other attending.

For further information, write to Milton Wilson, Jr. District Director, at the Small Business Administration, 9301 Southwest Freeway, Suite 550, Houston, Texas 77074-1591 or call (713) 773-6500.

**Shirl Thomas,**

*Director, Office of External Affairs.*

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## **SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

### **Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Request and Comment Request**

In compliance with PL. 104-13, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, SSA is providing notice of its information collection packages that require submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). SSA is soliciting comments on the accuracy of the agency's burden estimate; the need for the information; its practical utility; ways to enhance its quality, utility and clarity; and on ways to minimize burden on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

I. The information collections listed below will be submitted to OMB within 60 days from the date of this notice. Therefore, comments and recommendations regarding these information collections would be most useful if received by the Agency within 60 days from the date of this publication. Comments should be directed to the SSA Reports Clearance Officer at the address listed at the end of the notices.

1. *Application for Benefits Under a U.S. International Social Security Agreement—0960-0448.* The information collected on form SSA-2490 is used by the Social Security Administration to determine a claimant's eligibility for U.S. Social Security benefits under the provisions of an international social security agreement. It is also used to take an application for benefits from a foreign country under an agreement. The respondents are individuals who are applying for benefits from either the United States and/or a foreign country with which the United States has an agreement. The United States currently has 17 such agreements.

*Number of Respondents:* 20,000.

*Frequency of response:* 1.

*Average Burden per response:* 30 minutes.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 10,000 hours.

2. *0960-NEW.* Public Law 105-277 authorizes SSA to conduct a Medicare buy-in demonstration project to evaluate means to promote the Medicare buy-in programs targeted to elderly and disabled individuals under titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act. A lack of awareness about the Medicare buy-in programs appears to be one of the major obstacles to enrollments. Other obstacles to enrollment include the confusion of potential eligibles as to how to apply for these programs and a

preference for dealing with SSA field offices rather than with local Medicaid offices.

SSA will screen respondents voluntarily for potential Medicare Part B buy-in eligibility using a screening guide developed for this purpose. The screening guide will collect information from SSA beneficiaries regarding income, resources, marital status and living arrangements and also ask questions about their awareness of Medicare Part B buy-in programs. SSA will gather this information to identify and overcome obstacles to Medicare Part B buy-in enrollments and to screen for potential eligibility for Medicare Part B benefits. The demonstration project ends on December 31, 1999.

*Number of Respondents:* 130,000.

*Frequency of Response:* 1.

*Average Burden Per Response:* 20 minutes.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 43,334 hours.

II. The information collections listed below have been submitted to OMB for clearance. Written comments and recommendations on these information collections would be most useful if received within 30 days from the date of this publication. Comments should be directed to the SSA Reports Clearance Officer and the OMB Desk Officer at the addresses listed after these notices.

1. *Authorization to Obtain Earnings Data from the Social Security Administration—0960-NEW.* SSA collects this information when a wage earner or a third party requests detailed earnings information pertaining to the wage earner from the Social Security Administration. The information provided on form SSA-581 is used by SSA to verify the authorization to access earnings record data and to produce an itemized statement for release to the third party named on the form. The information is provided by the wage earner and/or the third party.

*Number of Respondents:* 60,000.

*Frequency of Response:* 1.

*Average Burden Per Response:* 2 minutes.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 2,000 hours.

2. *Organization Profile—0960-NEW.* The Social Security Administration (SSA) will use the information collected on the Organization Profile questionnaire to create a database of third party stakeholders. This database will support the delivery of information about Social Security programs to these interested parties, and enable SSA to target relevant information to those organizations while restricting unwanted material. The respondents are community organizations, State and